

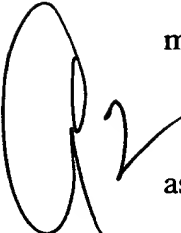
IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly replace Claims 1 and 9 as follows.

1. (Amended) A vehicle door handle device comprising:

a frame secured to an inside of an outer panel of a vehicle door and having a supporting portion and insertion holes;

a link rotatably mounted to the frame and urged by an urging force of an elastic member in one rotational direction;

 a grip-type outer handle mounted from outside the outer panel and operatively associated with the link to operate the link so as to rotate against the urging force of the elastic member;

the link being provided with a first engaging portion and axle portions each having a two faced portion;

the frame being provided with slots for inserting each of the two faced portions;

the frame being provided with supporting holes for rotatably supporting the axle portions; and

the frame being provided with a second engaging portion which engages the first engaging portion for holding the link in a preliminary holding position.

9. (Amended) A vehicle door handle device comprising:

a frame secured to an inside of an outer panel of a vehicle door, the frame having insertion holes, the frame including a pair of slots, a pair of supporting holes, and an engaging portion;

a link rotatably mounted on the frame and having an engaging portion, the link including a pair of axle portions each having at least one flat surface, each axle portion being insertable into one of the slots in the frame and rotatably supported by one of the supporting holes;

a spring connected to the link and applying a rotational urging force to the link in one rotational direction;

an outer handle having an insertion portion passing through the outer panel and into one of the insertion holes, the outer handle having an engaging portion passing through the outer panel and into another of the insertion holes, the insertion portion of the outer handle being in engagement with a portion of the link to rotate the link against the urging force of the elastic member upon operation of the outer handle;

the engaging portion of the frame engaging the engaging portion of the link to hold the link in a preliminary holding position.
